

Career pathways

Vocational schools in Saxony



Foreword

Dear students,

The questions »What can I do?« and »What do I want?« are important, warranted and challenging. »As you cannot do what you want, want what you can do. For wanting what you cannot do would be foolish.« This notion was true even during the times of Italian painter and philosopher Leonardo da Vinci, who coined the saying.

Choosing a course of study and career is one of the key crossroads of your life. Ideally, your career will fulfil you, still be enjoyable years down the track, and offer individual opportunities for development. That's why it's important to think about your personal and professional plans early on. Given the variety of training options and courses, this means exploring yourself, gaining practical experience, and weighing up your personal interests and strengths with the requirements of the working environment or course.

Support is available through the decision-making process in the form of your family, friends, and long-term, systematic professional focus on secondary schools (Oberschulen) and grammar schools (Gymnasien), e.g. by working with the »Berufswahlpass« (»career choice pass«). The highly practice-oriented nature of Fachoberschulen (specialised secondary education institutions) and Berufliche Gymnasien (upper secondary schools offering academic and vocational components), along with qualifying for a course, plays an equally important role in choosing a career at a university (of applied science), a vocational academy or in the dual system. The Career Information Centres (BiZ) run by Saxony's employment agencies, the »SCHAU REIN!« company open week in Saxony, »Girls' Day« and »Boys' Day«, held in spring, the »University open day in Saxony« and the »KarriereStart« trade fair for education, jobs and start-ups, held in January, can also help you make your decision, and present careers with good future prospects. In Saxony, these are primarily careers in technology, science and the eco-industries. Trade/craft and service careers also offer you innovative opportunities.

The road to the right career is not always easy. Sometimes you'll need a lot of staying power, and may find that the journey ends up being the (professional) destination. Like any orientation, you'll forever need strength, patience, and the willingness to redefine your goals if necessary. Trust in yourself and want what you can do! The many different opportunities offered by the vocational education system take into account your personal development, and provide you with a basis for lifelong learning.

This brochure gives you an overview of the vocational education system in Saxony. There are three main streams: Vocational schools and colleges (Berufsschulen und Berufsfachschulen) run courses which facilitate professional qualifications. Berufliche Gymnasien (upper secondary school offering academic and vocational components) and Fachoberschulen (specialised secondary education institutions) provide courses qualifying students for tertiary education, while Fachschulen (technical colleges) offer a wide range of options for advanced vocational training. These education objectives can be achieved a number of ways.

This booklet will tell you how the various training courses and pathways are structured, and what career prospects they open. The texts have QR codes which automatically direct you to the relevant »Education in Saxony« website.

I wish you all the best on your career-forging path.



Christian Piwarz
Saxon State Minister of Education and Culture





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Vocational education in Saxony

Vocational schools

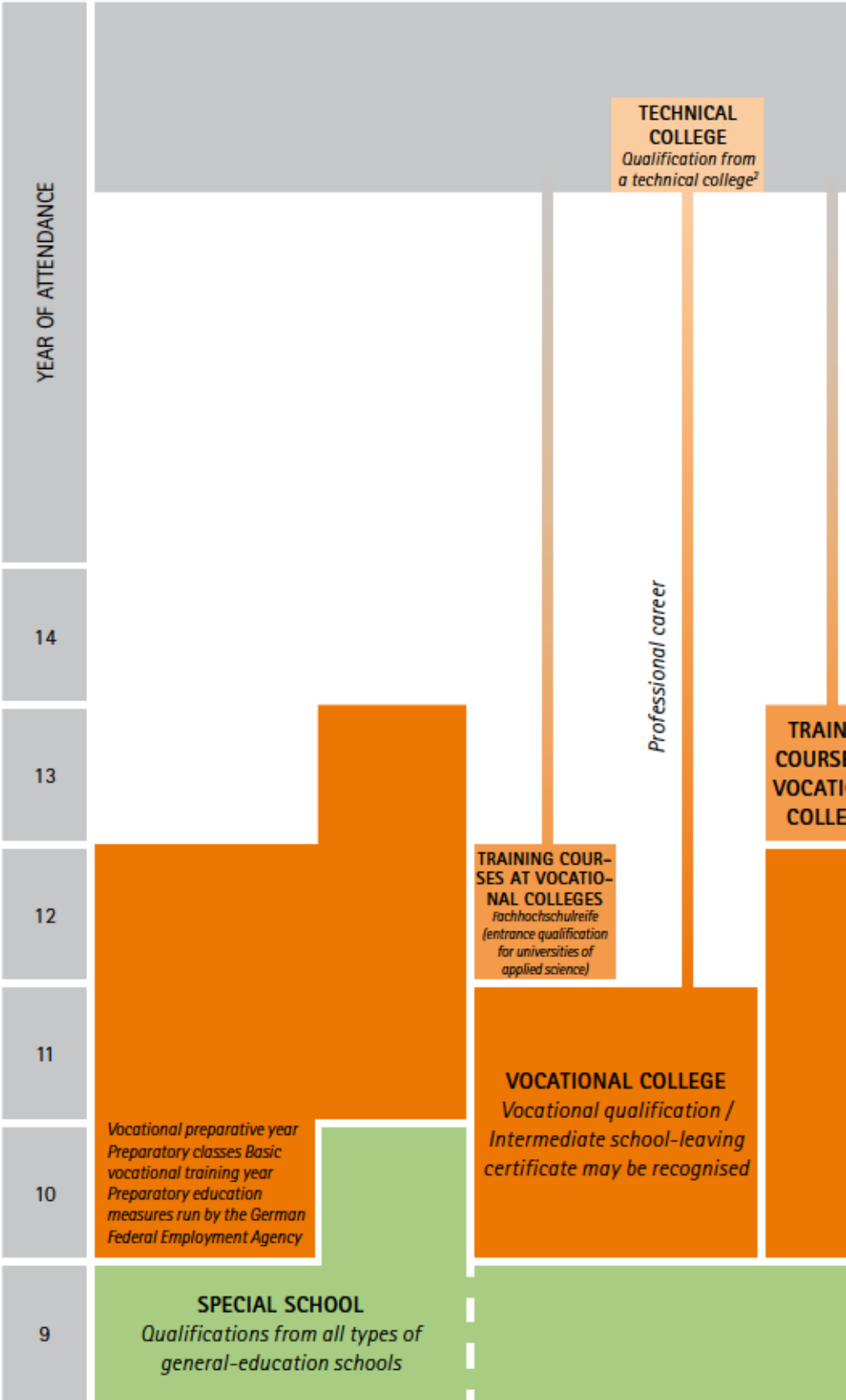
Vocational schooling in the Free State of Saxony offers varied vocational training courses and services. There are five different types of schools, with the following functions:

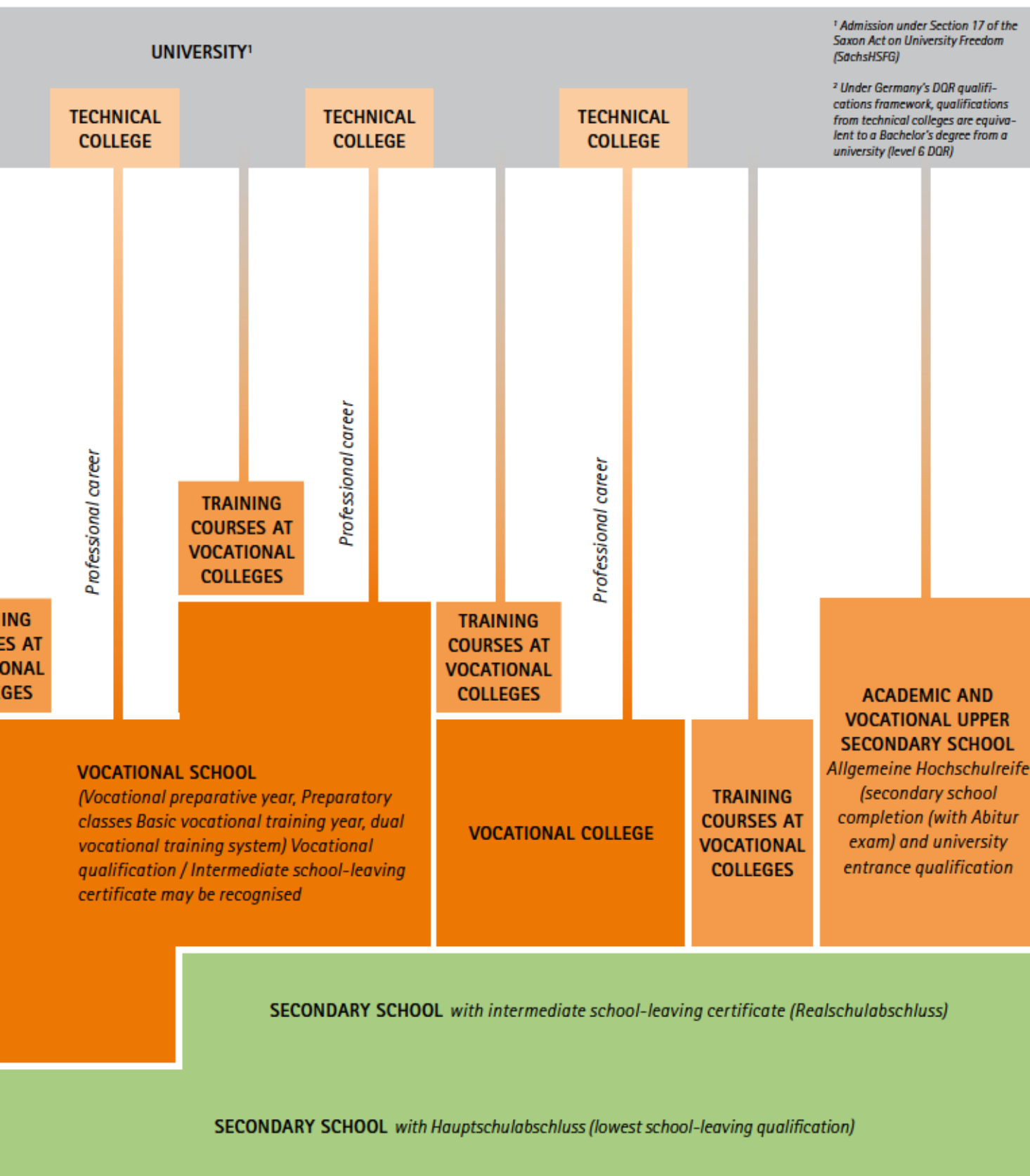
Berufsschulen (vocational schools) provide a dual-system vocational qualification in registered trades or professions, basic vocational training, or vocational preparation. Training at a **Berufsfachschule (vocational college)** enables students to obtain a vocational qualification that cannot be achieved through the dual system. **Fachoberschulen (specialised secondary education institutions)** and **Berufliche Gymnasien (academic and vocational upper secondary schools)** provide qualifications enabling students to undertake tertiary studies. The highly practice-oriented nature of Fachoberschulen and Berufliche Gymnasien, along with qualifying for a course, plays an equally important role in choosing a career at a university (of applied science), a vocational academy or in the dual system. **Fachschulen (technical colleges)** provide continued vocational education.

General school-leaving certificates or qualifications to enter universities of applied sciences may also be obtained through various vocational courses. It is also possible to obtain a vocational qualification and allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary school completion and university entrance qualification) or Fachhochschulreife (entrance to a university of applied science) conjointly.

Students with disabilities, chronic illnesses or special education needs are integrated into standard classes at vocational schools or extension schools wherever possible. Students with special education needs also have the option of being taught in special classes. Preparatory classes are set up for teenagers and young adults from migrant backgrounds, preparing them with the language skills to start vocational training or obtain a higher educational qualification.

This wide range of options gives all students the opportunity to undertake training meeting their academic requirements and their vocational education objectives.





Vocational education in Saxony

Education objectives and school locations



The following **education objectives** and offerings are available as part of the vocational-education programme:

Vocational training preparation

Courses for young people who have completed the compulsory nine years of full-time schooling, but who do not yet meet the requirements for vocational training in terms of their personal development and proficiency level.

Basic vocational training

Courses for acquiring basic knowledge and skills in one or more professions; they may sometimes be credited towards subsequent vocational training courses.

Vocational training

Courses which teach career-related skills and knowledge, and end in a vocational qualification.

Course qualification

Courses to obtain allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary school completion and university entrance qualification) or Fachhochschulreife (entrance to a university of applied science)

Double qualifications

Education courses and services that provide both a vocational qualification and qualify students for a course

Advanced vocational training

Courses which provide more advanced vocational qualifications following vocational training and generally also professional experience.

These education objectives can be achieved a number of ways. The following sections present the specific opportunities offered by the Saxon vocational schooling system here.

Vocational education centres

To ensure comprehensive education services which meet all needs, the various vocational school types are pooled together into vocational education centres (Berufliche Schulzentren, BSZ). As the core of vocational education, vocational schools are set up at every vocational education centre. The educational services offered at other types of schools are geared around the requirements of the job market, the demand from young adults, and the staffing and material requirements of the vocational education centres.

In addition to these centres, the Free State of Saxony also has technical colleges for agriculture and medical vocational colleges at hospitals.

Private institutions

In addition to public schools, there are private institutions run by private or religious organisations, associations, societies or individuals. They further enhance Saxony's education services, and may substitute public institutions if their main features match those of the public schooling system (Ersatzschulen or »alternative schools«).

While Saxon syllabuses are generally used, an Ersatzschule can also develop its own teaching methods which differ from those applied at public institutions. Ersatzschulen often charge school fees.

There are approved and accredited alternative schools. State-accredited Ersatzschulen can accept students, award academic and vocational qualifications, and conduct their own examinations just like public institutions.

Approved Ersatzschulen can meet the requirements of compulsory schooling, but cannot award academic or vocational qualifications. If students at these institutions wish to obtain such qualifications, they need to successfully sit the relevant school type's Schulfremdenprüfung (an examination for external pupils), which does not take into account preparatory work completed during

the course. As such, Schulfremdenprüfungen are more comprehensive than examinations at accredited alternative schools or public institutions.

Ergänzungsschulen (»supplementary schools«) are private institutions which do not serve as substitutes for public institutions. They act like schools in terms of their organisational structure and educational services, but are not comparable to a public school, and are therefore not classified as part of the Saxon schooling system.

It is not necessary to achieve a level of education comparable with a public school at these institutions. Ergänzungsschulen thus generally also refrain from using Saxon syllabuses, and the qualifications awarded here similarly do not correspond with the state qualifications awarded at public institutions or alternative schools. Ergänzungsschulen are consequently not authorised to issue detailed certificates with academic transcripts. Students at supplementary schools receive a statement of attendance or a certificate at the end of their course.



Vocational education in Saxony

Options at a glance



Education objective	School type/ Duration	Requirements	Achievable qualifications	Continued education
Vocational training preparation	Vocational school/1 year	Compliance with the compulsory full-time schooling requirement	Hauptschulabschluss (the lowest level of secondary school completion)	Vocational training
Basic vocational training	Vocational school/1 year	Compliance with the compulsory full-time schooling requirement		Vocational training
Vocational training	Vocational school 2 to 3.5 years	Compliance with full-time compulsory schooling requirement, training contract	Vocational qualification, intermediate school-leaving certificate	Further vocational training, specialised secondary education institution (1 year), vocational college
	Vocational college 2 or 3 years	Generally a Realschulabschluss (intermediate school-leaving certificate), sometimes also a Hauptschulabschluss (lowest school-leaving qualification)	Vocational qualification, intermediate school-leaving certificate	
Course qualification	Specialised secondary education institution/2 years	Realschulabschluss	Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification for universities of applied science)	Vocational training, studies at a vocational academy, Studies at a university of applied science
	Specialised secondary education institution/1 year	Realschulabschluss and vocational qualification		Advanced vocational training, Studies at a university of applied science
	Upper secondary school offering academic and vocational components/3 years	Realschulabschluss with specific grade average, must be aged under 18 (or under 21 in the case of vocational qualifications)	Allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary school completion (with Abitur exam))	Vocational training, advanced vocational training, university studies
Double qualifications	Specialised secondary education institution and vocational school/ 4 to 4.5 years	Realschulabschluss, Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science), Training contract on shorter dual training system	Fachhochschulreife and vocational qualification	Advanced vocational training, Studies at a university of applied science
	Upper secondary school offering academic and vocational components, and vocational school/ 4 to 4.5 years	Realschulabschluss with specific grade average, Aged under 18 or, in the case of a vocational qualification, under 21, training contract	Allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary school completion (with Abitur exam) and university entrance qualification) and vocational qualification	Advanced vocational training, university studies
	Technical college with additional training and examinations (entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences)/ 2 or 3 years	Realschulabschluss combined with completed vocational training and generally a job	Fachschulabschluss (Technical college leaving certificate) with Fachhochschulreife	Studies at a university of applied science
Advanced vocational training	Technical college/ 2 to 3 years	Completed vocational training and generally a job	Fachschulabschluss (Technical college leaving certificate)	University studies

Vocational training preparation and basic vocational training



Preparatory year

Basic vocational training year

General

Young adults who cannot find an in-house apprenticeship training position after successfully completing secondary school, or who have finished secondary school without obtaining the lowest level of secondary-school completion (Hauptschulabschluss) can undertake basic vocational training by preparing to start a vocational training course or job as part of one-year courses at a vocational school. This will fulfil the compulsory vocational schooling requirement.

Career fields

Many recognised trades or professions have shared bases, and can therefore follow a shared curriculum during the first year of training at a vocational school. The broad nature of the basic training within a career field increases flexibility in the training and job market. Most of the approx. 350 recognised trades/professions fall into the various career industries, which are currently:

- Automotive engineering,
- Body care,
- Business and administration,
- Chemistry, physics and biology,
- Colour techniques and interior design,
- Electrical engineering,
- Food, hospitality and domestic services,
- Information technology,
- Metalworking,
- Print and media technology,
- Production and services in environmental affairs and agriculture,



- Structural engineering,
- Textile technology and clothing,
- Wood technologies.

Pre-vocational training year

The aim of the preparatory year is to help adolescents choose a career, and prepare for vocational training. Students receive vocational orientation in two career fields (e.g. wood technologies and metalworking). Lessons cover cross-industry (general subjects) and career-specific areas (study areas of the individual aspects of the career), as well as compulsory electives. Upon successful completion, they are awarded the Hauptschulabschluss (the lowest level of secondary school completion).

Basic vocational training year

Adolescents who have achieved the Hauptschulabschluss, but who have not yet found a training placement, may also complete a basic vocational training year as basic vocational training during the first year. Lessons cover cross-industry (general subjects) and career-specific (study areas) components, teaching both theoretical and practical content relating to a career industry (e.g. wood technologies or metalworking). Successful completion of the basic vocational training year may be credited as the first year of a subsequent vocational training course.

Education objective	School type/Course	Requirements	Duration	Examination	Qualification
Vocational training preparation	Vocational school/Preparatory year	Compliance with the compulsory full-time schooling requirement	1 to 2 years	Final exams	No vocational qualification, Hauptschulabschluss possible
Basic vocational training	Vocational school/Basic vocational training year	Hauptschulabschluss (the lowest level of secondary school completion)	1 year	No examination	No vocational qualification, may be credited as an initial year of training in a subsequent dual-system course

Vocational training

Two paths – one goal



A vocational qualification can be achieved in two ways:

- Path 1: Dual vocational training** at a company and the vocational school,
- Path 2: Full-time vocational training** at a school with internal and external practical training components.

Vocational schools and vocational colleges share the common aim of teaching adolescents the necessary skills for their chosen career and encouraging personal development. The aims and content of the interdisciplinary subjects, as well as the level of career-related training, at both school types are therefore largely comparable. They differ as follows:

	Path 1: Dual-system vocational training	Path 2: Full-time classroom vocational training
Requirements	Compliance with the compulsory full-time schooling requirement	Usually a Realschulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate)
Recognised trades or professions/ Courses	Approx. 250 trades/professions recognised under the Vocational Training Act or Trade & Crafts Act in Saxony	Careers in health/social work/nursing, rare skilled trades, rare skilled trade professions
Practical vocational content taught	in-house at the company	at the vocational college and external establishments run by the vocational college
Cross-industry and career-specific content	at the vocational school	at the vocational college



Vocational training

Vocational school



Function

Most young adults learn a trade through the dual vocational training system, in which the training workplace and vocational school work together as equal partners. The Berufsschule (vocational school) is, however, an independent place of learning. Its task is to help develop vocational skills and deepen general education through action-based lessons. The training at the vocational school, together with the training workplaces, ends with a vocational qualification in a recognised trade/profession. General school qualifications can also be obtained.

Requirements

Anyone who has met the compulsory full-time schooling requirement, still needs to attend a vocational school, and has signed a training contract. No specific school-leaving certificate is required.

Duration and schedule

Depending on the recognised trade/profession, the vocational school course runs for between two and three and a half years. It begins with basic vocational training, which all students training for careers in a specific field can complete together during the first year. From the second year onwards, specialised classes for individual or related careers are generally run.

Lesson structure

Vocational school lessons may be run on specific weekdays or in multi-week blocks (modules). In the case of the former, students generally have two lesson days a week during the first and second year, and one lesson day a week during the third and fourth year. In the case of lesson blocks, related modules run for multiple weeks. One day of lessons generally consists of eight classes.

Content

Lessons cover career-specific and cross-industry content in the following subjects:

- | English,
- | Economics,
- | German/Communication,
- | Religion or ethics,
- | Social studies,
- | Physical education.

Examinations

The vocational school itself does not conduct any examinations. Theory and practical skills are examined by the relevant authority, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry or the Chamber of Trades and Crafts. The course content taught at the vocational school serves as the main basis of the written examination.

General certifications/qualifications

If students have not yet achieved the Hauptschulabschluss (lowest level of secondary school completion), their certificate of studies issued by the vocational school will confirm that they have achieved a level of education equivalent to it. Intermediate school-leaving certificates are recognised if a satisfactory overall result has been achieved in the chamber examination, and an average grade of at least 3.0 has been achieved in the graduation certificate.

Vocational training

Vocational college



Function

The task of the vocational college is to provide general-education school graduates with a vocational qualification. It teaches both cross-industry and career-specific content. Students gain practical experience and insights into work processes through internships and practical external training. Intermediate school-leaving certificates can also be obtained in certain cases.

Subject structure

Nationally recognised vocational qualifications in social industries, health and nursing can be obtained at Saxony's vocational colleges. The following vocational colleges are available:

- For health professions,
- For medical documentation,
- For nursing,
- For social welfare.

Some rare recognised trades/professions, e.g. watchmakers and violin makers, can also be learned.

Requirements

Training courses generally require a Real-schulabschluss (medium-level secondary school-leaving certificate) or equivalent qualification. In the area of health and nursing, it is imperative students are of suitable health themselves. Proof of a training contract is required for courses in aged care and nursing, as well for midwife and paramedic training. Some health professions require an additional training contract, e.g. in nursing.

Admission process

Placements must be applied for in writing.

Application documents include:

- An informal application signed by the student or, if underage, by a guardian;
- A certified copy of certificates proving the admission requirements have been met (if no graduation certificate is currently available, the certificate of studies from the last semester must be enclosed, and the graduation certificate submitted as soon as it is issued later on);
- A certificate of good conduct, if necessary.

Application appointments may be requested at vocational training centres, hospitals, the local state offices for schooling and education, or the career information centres (BiZ) run by the employment agencies. The applicant will be notified in writing regarding the admission decision, and must submit written confirmation, within two weeks of receiving said notice, that he/she will commence the training.

Duration and qualification

Training at vocational colleges runs for between two and three years, ending with a final state-certified examination. By passing this examination, the graduates are granted the right to bear a specific professional title. Students who have completed the lowest form of secondary schooling (Hauptschüler) are recognised as having achieved the Mittlerer Schulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate) if the certificate of studies shows an overall average grade of at least 3.0.

Vocational training

Training courses at vocational schools



School type/Course	Requirements	Duration	Examination	Qualification
Vocational college for health professions governed by federal law	Usually a Realschulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate), proof of suitable health/fitness, and a certificate of good conduct	2.5 to 3 years	Final state-certified examination before the relevant authority (state central office)	Dietician Speech therapist Massage therapist and medicinal bath practitioner Medical laboratory technician Medical radiology technician Medical technical assistant for functional diagnostics Midwife (m/f) Nursing professional Occupational therapist Orthoptist Paramedic Pharmaceutical technician Physiotherapist Podiatrist Veterinary technician
Vocational college for medical documentation	Realschulabschluss	3 years	State-accredited final examination	State-certified medical documentation assistant
Vocational college for social services	Realschulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate), certificate of good conduct	2 years	State-accredited final examination	State-certified care worker
Vocational college for nursing	Proof of suitable health/fitness, certificate of good conduct	2 years	State-accredited final examination	State-certified nurse
Vocational college for instrument builders	Hauptschulabschluss, suitable manual skills and musicality	3 years	Examination before the Chamber of Trades and Crafts	Violin maker Accordion maker Luthier
Vocational college for watchmakers	Hauptschulabschluss (lowest level of school-leaving certificate), suitable manual skills	3 years	Examination before the Chamber of Trades and Crafts	Watchmaker

Course qualification

Specialised secondary education



Function and duration

As an important follow-on from the intermediate school-leaving certificate, Fachoberschulen (specialised secondary education institutions) enable students to achieve Fachhochschulreife. This serves as the basis for studying at a university, university of applied science or vocational academy.

The highly practice-oriented nature of the two-year Fachoberschule course, along with qualifying for a course, plays an equally important role in choosing a career pathway in the chosen field.

NB: There is no age limit for admissions. Fachhochschulreife can be achieved over two school years (years 11 and 12) or in one school year (grade 12), depending on professional and life experience. The Fachoberschule thus gives a large number of adolescents, and young and older adults an opportunity to qualify for tertiary studies.

Specialised fields

- Agricultural economics, biotechnology and environmental technology,
- Business and administration.
- Design,
- Engineering,
- Health and social affairs.

Subject choice is not binding for subsequent studies.

Requirements

- Two-year course at a Fachoberschule (specialised secondary education institution): Realschulabschluss
- One-year course at a Fachoberschule: Field-related vocational qualification under federal or state law involving at least two years of training, or three years of relevant professional experience (if the vocational qualification is not relevant) and a Realschulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate)

Admission process

Admission applications must be submitted to the Vocational Training Centre assigned to the Fachoberschule offering the desired field of study by 31 March of the school year preceding the intended course start date.

For the two-year course, applicants must enclose

- A certified copy of the certificate proving they meet the admission requirements.
- If this certificate is not yet available, they must provide a certified copy of the certificate of studies from the last semester, and then submit a certified copy of the certificate proving their compliance with the admission requirements as soon as this becomes available.

For the one-year course, applications must submit

- A certified copy of the certificate proving they meet the admission requirements, and a certified copy of their vocational school graduation certificate and their vocational qualification, and, if applicable
- Proof of at least three years' work experience in a relevant profession.

The following must be provided regardless of the course duration:

- A complete CV in table form with photograph in passport format;
- A statement on the field of study, whether they have already participated in a selection process at a Fachoberschule, and whether they have already attended a Fachoberschule or a final examination at a Fachoberschule, and what result they achieved;
- If necessary, a statement on any hardship.

Content

Arts/Languages

- English (examination subject)
- German (examination subject)
- History/Social studies
- Music or art or literature

Science

- Chemistry or physics or biology
- Mathematics (examination subject)

Other subjects

- Ethics or religion
- Physical education (two-year Fachoberschule course)

For one-year Fachoberschule courses, physical education is replaced by two hours a week as set by the school in a bid to adapt to the two-year Fachoberschule course.

Field-based subjects

- Agricultural economics, biotechnology and environmental technology: Agricultural biology (examination subject), production technology
- Business and management: Economics and business administration with accounting (examination subject), law
- Design: Artistic aesthetics (examination subject), art and cultural history
- Engineering/Technical: Applied physics (examination subject), technology
- Health and social studies: Health promotion and social work (examination subject), law

Course hours

- Grade 11: 16 hours a week plus 800 clock hours of the practical component
- Grade 12: 32 hours a week

A written paper on a field-based topic must be completed in grade 12. This will involve applying the knowledge and skill acquired in class, as well as practical course content or professional experience gained. The topic and grade achieved for the paper is shown separately in the certificate of Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science)



Course qualification

Academic and vocational upper secondary school

Function

Anyone who has completed general schooling or vocational training with good results can obtain allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary school-leaving certificate entitling entrance to universities) at a Berufliches Gymnasium (academic and vocational upper secondary school), qualifying them to study at German universities or even abroad. Unlike an allgemeinbildendes Gymnasium (general grammar school), the Berufliches Gymnasium teaches career-specific content in the chosen field of study, introducing students to the professional working world in a unique way.

Duration

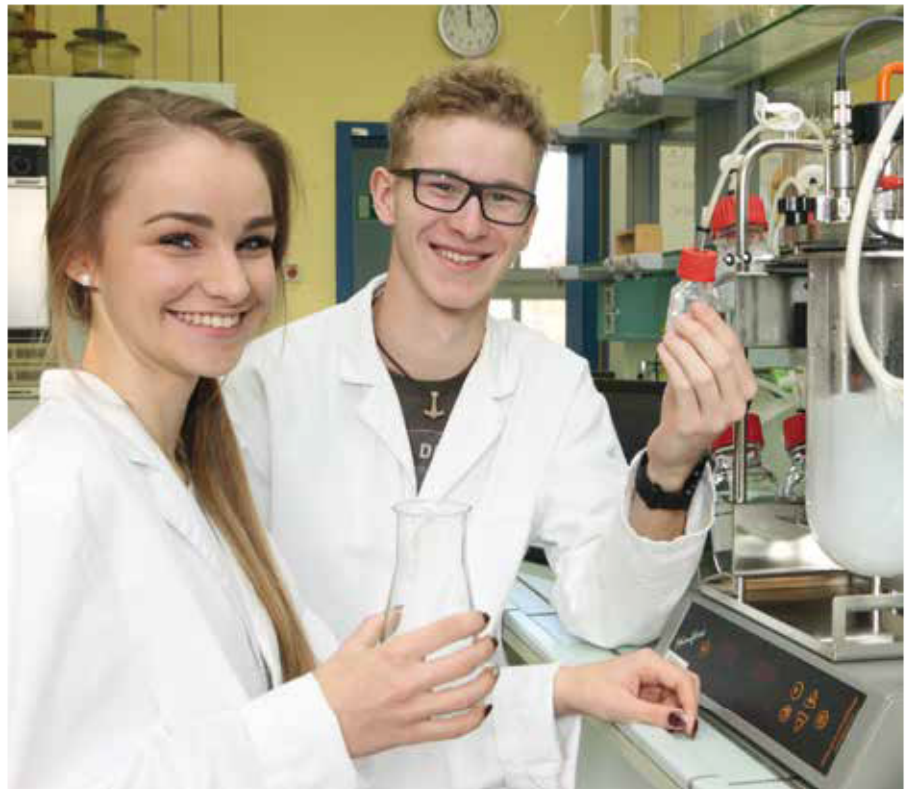
The course runs for three years, and is split into an introductory phase in grade 11 and the qualification phase in years 12 and 13. It ends with the Abitur (school-leaving) examination.

Specialised fields

Berufliche Gymnasien offer the following fields of study:

- Agricultural science,
- Biotechnology,
- Nutritional science,
- Health and social studies,
- Information and communication technology,
- Technical science, specialising in structural engineering, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering,
- Economics.

Subject choice is not binding for subsequent studies. For example, someone who initially chooses «technical sciences» can later also study business administration.





Requirements

Berufliche Gymnasien accept:

- Graduates from an Oberschule (a type of secondary school) or equivalent general-education school, whose average Realschulabschluss (medium-level school-leaving certificate) grade is better than 2.5. They must have achieved the grade of »good« at least twice in the subjects of German, mathematics, English and a field-based subject. The subject of biology is classified under the fields of agricultural economics, biotechnology and health & social studies, the subject of chemistry is classified under the field of nutrition science, the subject of IT is classified under the fields of information & communication technology and economics, and the subject of physics is classified under the field of technical science.
- Graduates from an Oberschule or equivalent general-education school, whose average Realschulabschluss grade is better than 3.0, and who have proven their qualifications for the relevant field of study in an interview.
- Students from allgemeinbildende Gymnasien (general grammar schools) with certificates showing completion of grade 10 (and promotion to grade 11), or who can prove they have obtained the Realschulabschluss.
- Students who have successfully completed ten years of general schooling with a Realschulabschluss or equivalent certificate, and at least two years of vocational training. Certificates of studies from general-education schools must show an average grade better than 3.0, whereby a minimum grade of »satisfactory« must be achieved in the subjects of German, Mathematics and English. Certificates of studies from vocational schools must show an average grade better than 2.5. A school qualification obtained abroad is deemed equivalent to a Realschulabschluss or

mittlerer Schulabschluss (intermediate school-leaving certificate) insofar as this has been recognised as equivalent by the relevant school supervisory authority. The admission requirements are considered as having been met if the average grade from all subjects forming part of this qualification is better than 3.0.

All applications must demonstrate at least six years of continuous English lessons. Students commencing grade 11 must not be aged 18 or over; if proof of completed vocational training can be provided, students must not be aged 21 or over. Exceptions may be permitted in specific cases.

Admission process

An informal admission application must be submitted to the vocational education centre where the Berufliches Gymnasium with the desired focus area and, if applicable, specialised field is established. The application documents include certified copies of certificates proving compliance with the admission requirements. The vocational training centre can provide further details on the application process. The application period ends on 31 March of the intended year of study commencement.

Content

Grade 11 provides opportunities to balance out various learning requirements and prepare students for the qualification phase in a class setting. Lessons in grade 12 and 13 follow the same basic and advanced course format as grammar schools.

All disciplines are covered in the subjects of German, English, a second foreign language, History/Social Studies, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, IT, Religion or Ethics, Physical Education, and with the exception of Economics in the subject of Business/Law.

In the qualification phase, the 1st advanced-level subject is chosen from German, English and mathematics. The 2nd advanced-level subject provides a specific orientation to the chosen career field:

- Agricultural engineering with biology in the field of agriculture,
- Bioengineering in the field of biotechnology,
- Nutrition science with chemistry in the field of nutritional science,
- Health and social studies in the field of health and social welfare,
- IT systems in the field of information and communication technology,
- Engineering in the field of technology sciences,
- Economics and business administration with accounting in the field of economics.

In terms of electives, there are options for specialised, subject-specific extension, in addition to the courses offered in the subjects of Art, Music and Literature (two courses need to be completed in these subjects during the qualification phase) and an additional foreign language. In order to gradually introduce the students to academic work, each grade 11 pupil compiles written material or an activity report on the compulsory two-week internship/project. During the qualification phase, they complete an assignment in a subject of their choice, and have the chance to include independent work over two semesters in their Abitur (school-leaving) examination as a Besondere Lernleistung (BELL) or »separate academic achievement«.

Double qualification

Dual-system vocational training with Saxon Abitur (school-leaving examination)

Specialised secondary education institution and shorter dual vocational training system

Technical college with additional training and examinations (»entrance qualification to a university of applied science«)



The (advanced) vocational training options include courses and services which prepare students for vocational qualifications and for obtaining Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) or allgemeine Hochschulreife (secondary-school completion and university entrance qualification (Abitur)).

Dual-system vocational training with Saxon Abitur (school-leaving examination)



In Saxony, a vocational qualification can be obtained in conjunction with allgemeine Hochschulreife (Abitur – school-leaving examination qualifying students for university). Over four to four and a half years, the in-house practical training at workplaces is combined with the academic component at Berufliche Gymnasien and vocational schools. Training is generally available in the following recognised trades/professions:

Specialised secondary education institution and shorter dual vocational training system



Students seeking to undertake a shorter dual system of vocational training after attending a Fachoberschule may continue the practical component of their training in year 12. Some of the classroom lessons here can be completed via e-learning using the central Saxon online learning platform OPAL Schule. Two qualifications can be obtained in four to four and a half years: Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) and a qualification in a recognised dual-system trade/profession.

Technical college with additional training and examinations (»entrance qualification to a university of applied science«)

Fachhochschulreife can be obtained in all fields except two-year courses at agricultural technical colleges.

	Electronics technician	IT specialists, as well as IT and telecomms systems engineers	Industrial administrator	Industrial mechanic and lathe operator	Mechatronics engineer	Metalworker
Field of study at the Berufliches Gymnasium	Technical science	Information and communication technology	Economics	Technical science	Technical science	Technical science
Second advanced-level subject at the Berufliches Gymnasium	Engineering/ Electrical engineering	IT systems	Economics and business administration with accounting	Engineering/ Mechanical engineering	Engineering/ Electrical engineering	Engineering/ Mechanical engineering

Advanced vocational training

Technical college



If a higher vocational qualification is the objective, technical colleges offer a wide range of further training options.

Function

Fachschulen build on their students' theoretical and practical vocational experiences, and prepare them for roles in middle management or for independently performing tasks involving responsibility. Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) can be obtained in some cases. Graduates of technical colleges in the Free State of Saxony gain entitlement to study at universities.

Requirements

Admission requirements vary for the individual subject areas. Completed vocational training and proof of professional work are generally necessary.

Duration

The training runs for two or three years full-time. If taken part-time, it is extended accordingly. Training courses in the field of social studies include several months of practical vocational training.

Content

Lessons cover cross-industry and career-specific content, such as starting up and managing businesses, and HR, quality & project management. Compulsory electives for further extension are also offered in social subjects.

Final examination

All technical college courses end with final examinations consisting of written and usually also oral and practical components.

Qualifications

By successfully completing the training, the graduates are entitled to bear one of the following professional titles:

- State-accredited agricultural business administrator
+ field,
- State-accredited business administrator,
+ field,
- State-accredited childcare worker,
- State-accredited designer
+ field,
- State-accredited manager
+ field,
- State-accredited special needs carer,
- State-accredited technician
+ field,

See the following tables for possible specialised fields:

Technical college, faculty of social studies with the specialised fields of:	Technical college for design, with the specialised field of:	Technical college for engineering, with the specialised fields of:		Technical college for business, with the specialised fields of:	Technical college for agriculture offering courses in*:
Special needs carer Social pedagogy	Communication design	Automotive engineering Colour and coatings technology Chemical engineering Clothing technology Drilling engineering Electrical engineering Engineering geology Food technology Foundry technology IT Mechanical engineering Mechatronics	Medical engineering Metal construction engineering Mine engineering Plastics technology Plumbing, heating & air-conditioning technology Precision engineering Refrigeration and air-conditioning system technology Structural engineering Textile technology Wood technologies	Business administration Hospitality	Agriculture Agricultural economics Agricultural engineering Home economics Horticulture

* Run by the Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Action, the Environment and Agriculture

Vocational education for adolescents with special support needs



Tasks

Disabilities, chronic illnesses or special education needs may mean personal support is required during vocational training for adolescents. The primary aim is always to enable the students to obtain suitable vocational qualifications in a recognised trade/profession, while ensuring the earliest possible integration into the professional working world.

Vocational schooling in the Free State of Saxony offers varied vocational training courses and services for adolescents with and without disabilities. There are various options to suit their relevant needs:

- Vocational training preparation (1 to 2 years),
- Basic vocational training (1 year),
- Vocational training (2 to 3.5 years)
- Tertiary course qualification (1 to 3 years)
- Double qualification (2 to 4.5 years).

The respective courses on offer at public and independent schools serve as the basis for continuing the education pathway to tertiary studies.

The school's board of directors decides whether or not a student is admitted to a specific school.

Special classes

The primary aim is to enable the students to obtain vocational qualifications in a recognised trade/profession. Ideally, these students will study in the same classes as other students learning the same trade. If the type and severity of a disability, and resulting requirements, prevents a student from attending a vocational-school class, special classes are set up based on the Saxon Schools Act.

»Special Classes« are available in the following:

- Recognised trades/professions,
- Recognised trades/professions, extended format,
- Training courses under Section 66 of the Vocational Training Act or 42r of the Trades and Crafts Act (e.g. skilled worker careers).



Classes are much smaller, and can cater to special needs as required.

Other pathways for students requiring support with intellectual development

Students requiring support with intellectual development can be admitted into the 2-year preparatory year if they have previously attended secondary school (Oberschule) and are expected to achieve the learning objective of the 2-year preparatory year.

The aims of the 2-year preparatory year are to help the students choose a career, and ensure they are prepared for and admitted into a vocational training course. As such, lessons are offered in 2 of a possible 14 career fields, such as the combination of metal-working/structural engineering, health/nutrition, hospitality and domestic service.

After successfully completing the 2-year preparatory year, students without a Hauptschulabschluss (lowest school-leaving qualification) receive a certificate from the vocational school, confirming they have achieved a level of education equivalent to attending an Oberschule and obtaining a Hauptschulabschluss.

Students for whom none of the aforementioned pathways are suitable for obtaining a vocational qualification can prepare for later-life requirements as part of the school's practical Werkstufe course, specialising in providing support with intellectual development.

The preparatory objective of this final practical course (Werkstufe) is to provide basic, broad, career-focused and pre-professional training.

Its primary focus is not on preparing students for performing a particular function in a sheltered workshop or at a business on the general job market. It is instead about developing key competencies, e.g. navigating public life, preparing for independent living, or expanding on skills to build and maintain social contacts and partnerships. This also involves successfully applying the components of career-finding.

Pre-course preparatory measures run by the German Federal Employment Agency

The Employment Agency offers special education services for adolescents with disabilities, to prepare them for vocational training. The youths are prepared for a recognised trade/profession or vocational training suitable for their individual skills and abilities. They receive vocational training classes one day a week.

Vocational education for adolescents from a migrant background



Preparatory classes

Preparatory classes are set up for teenagers and young adults from migrant backgrounds, preparing them with the language skills to start vocational training or obtain a higher educational qualification (e.g. at a Berufliches Gymnasium or Fachoberschule). As part of the preparatory classes, the students, based on the specific vocational training they aim to undertake in future, attend the standard lessons at a vocational school for two months in accordance with the »German as a second language with the foundations of qualifying for training and professional orientation« curriculum.



Education objective	School type/Course	Requirements	Duration	Examination	Qualification
Vocational training preparation	Vocational school/ Preparatory class	Compliance with the compulsory full-time schooling requirement	1 year	No examination	No qualification

Further information

School supervisory authorities

Saxon State Ministry for Culture and Education

Street address:

Carolaplatz 1, 01097 Dresden

Postal address:

Postfach 10 09 10, 01079 Dresden

Telephone number of the

civic affairs officer: 0351 564-65122

Email: buerger@bildung.sachsen.de



Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Action, the Environment and Agriculture (for agricultural technical colleges)

Street address:

Wilhelm-Buck-Straße 2, 01097 Dresden

Postal address:

Postfach 10 05 10, 01076 Dresden

Telephone: 0351 564-23108

Email: ulrike.dornwell@smul.sachsen.de



State Office for Schooling and Education

The State Office for Schooling and Education provides assistance, counselling and information in the following areas:

- School pathways,
- Course content and qualifications at the various types of schools,
- Funding options for boarding vocational school students,
- School psychological counselling,
- Enrolment approval for compulsory vocational school students on site at the institution.



Addresses

State Office for Schooling and Education Bautzen

Street address:

Otto-Nagel-Straße 1, 02625 Bautzen

Postal address:

Postfach 44 44, 02634 Bautzen

Telephone: 03591 621-0

Email: poststelle-b@lasub.smk.sachsen.de

State Office for Schooling and Education Chemnitz

Street address:

Annaberger Straße 119, 09120 Chemnitz

Postal address:

Postfach 13 34, 09072 Chemnitz

Telephone: 0371 5366-0

Email: poststelle-c@lasub.smk.sachsen.de

State Office for Schooling and Education Dresden

Street address:

Großenhainer Straße 92, 01127 Dresden

Postal address:

Postfach 23 01 20, 01111 Dresden

Telephone: 0351 8439-0

Email: poststelle-d@lasub.smk.sachsen.de

State Office for Schooling and Education Leipzig

Street address:

Nonnenstraße 17 A, 04229 Leipzig

Postal address:

Postfach 10 06 53, 04006 Leipzig

Telephone: 0341 4945-50

Email: poststelle-l@lasub.smk.sachsen.de

State Office for Schooling and Education Zwickau

Street address:

Makarenkostraße 2, 08066 Zwickau

Postal address:

Postfach 20 09 42, 08009 Zwickau

Telephone: 0375 4444-0

Email: poststelle-z@lasub.smk.sachsen.de

Further information

Career Information Centres (BiZ)

run by the Employment Agency



The career information centres run by the employment agencies in Saxony are the first port of call when it comes to job searches or choosing careers. Saxony has eleven Career Information Centres operating out of the Employment Agency branches. These can provide information, e.g. on the latest developments on the job market, at any time, without prior appointment. A wide range of free information services are available, including all online media, information packs on career fields, as well as brochures and flyers. Application documents and similar documentation can also be created at special computer work stations.

The digital BiZ Mobile also supplies schools in smaller towns with Career Information Centre information material. Along with the existing career information materials, the digital BiZ Mobile additionally provides tablets for entire classes using its own Internet connection.

Addresses

Annaberg-Buchholz Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Paulus-Jenisius-Straße 43,
09456 Annaberg-Buchholz
Telephone: 03733 133-6186
Email: annaberg-buchholz.biz
@arbeitsagentur.de

Bautzen Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Neusalzaer Straße 2, 02625 Bautzen
Telephone: 03591 66-1410
Email: bautzen.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Chemnitz Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Heinrich-Lorenz-Straße 20, 09120 Chemnitz
Telephone: 0371 567-2202
Email: chemnitz.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Dresden Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Henriette-Heber-Straße 6, 01069 Dresden
Telephone: 0351 2885-1431
Email: dresden.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Freiberg Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Annaberger Straße 22A, 09599 Freiberg
Telephone: 03731 489-555
Email: freiberg.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Leipzig Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Georg-Schumann-Straße 150, 04159 Leipzig
Telephone: 0341 913-27326
Email: leipzig.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Oschatz Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Oststraße 3, 04758 Oschatz
Telephone: 03435 980-292
Email: oschatz.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Pirna Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Seminarstraße 9, 01796 Pirna
Telephone: 03501 791-510
Email: pirna.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Plauen Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Neundorfer Straße 70 - 72, 08523 Plauen
Telephone: 03741 23-2140
Email: plauen.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Riesa Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Rudolf-Breitscheid-Straße 35, 01587 Riesa
Telephone: 03525 711-213
Email: riesa.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Zwickau Employment Agency Career Information Centre (BiZ)

Street address:

Werdauer Straße 18, 08056 Zwickau
Telephone: 0375 314-1848
Email: zwickau.biz@arbeitsagentur.de

Further information

Rights and duties



Compulsory vocational school attendance

Compulsory vocational school attendance applies to all youths living in Saxony, or whose primary place of residence is here and who have met the requirement of nine years of compulsory full-time schooling. Compulsory vocational school attendance means regularly attending class, participating in other mandatory school events, and upholding the school regulations. It generally lasts three years, and can also be satisfied by attending the relevant private institution.

Free choice of school; catchment areas

Schools specialising in vocational training generally do not have specific catchment areas. Berufsfachschulen (vocational colleges), Fachoberschulen (specialised secondary education institutions), Berufliche Gymnasien (upper secondary schools offering academic and vocational components) and Fachschulen (technical colleges) can thus be chosen freely. This is not the case for Berufsschulen (vocational schools). The specific nature of the lessons resulting from the wide variety of registered trades/professions makes it necessary to set catchment areas for the respective vocational schools. Students with a vocational training contract must generally attend the vocational school in their local catchment area. National subject categories with a significantly broadened catchment area must be established for professions with few trainees. This leads to longer school commutes. In some cases, on-campus accommodation is required.

Enrolment, application

Students with a vocational training contract are enrolled with the relevant vocational school through their training workplace. Those without a contract attend a vocational training preparation course or the basic vocational training at a vocational school or a career-qualifying course at a vocational college, depending on their individual requirements. They can also continue their training at a specialised secondary education centre (Fachoberschule) or at an academic and vocational upper secondary school (Berufliches

Gymnasium). For all these courses, the appropriate admission applications must be addressed to the relevant vocational training establishment by the student themselves or by their parents.

Waiver of compulsory vocational school attendance

Compulsory vocational school attendance may be waived for the following reasons:

- Student attends a general or vocation-focused school full-time,
- Student attends a university or university of applied science,
- Student completes voluntary military service or federal volunteer service,
- Student undertakes a traineeship under public law (e.g. preparatory service for public servants),
- Student gives birth (in accordance with the German Maternity Protection Act),
- Student completes a year of volunteering (for social or environmental causes).

End of compulsory vocational school attendance

Once a student reaches legal age, vocational school attendance ceases to be compulsory. However, anyone in a vocational training arrangement at this time remains obliged to attend the training until its completion. Vocational preparative years or basic vocational training years classify as attending vocational school.

Voluntary vocational school attendance

Anyone who starts a vocational training arrangement after they turn 18 may attend the vocational school voluntarily. Like compulsory students, these voluntary students are similarly obliged to regularly attend classes and uphold the school regulations.

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